

# Daily Current Affairs

## 12 December 2024

### Abathsahayeshwarar Temple Wins UNESCO Award

- **Abathsahayeshwarar Temple in Thukkatchi**, a 1,300-year-old Chola dynasty structure in **Tamil Nadu's Thanjavur district**, has gained international recognition by **UNESCO's 2023 Award of Distinction for its exceptional conservation efforts**.
- The temple was constructed by Kings **Vikrama Chola and Kulothunga Chola** and featured five prakarams or enclosures. The village was known as **Vikrama Chozheeswaram and Kulothunga Chola Nallur**.



- Kulothunga Chola established the idol for **Aadhi Sarabeshwarar**. The temple houses many deities, including Soundaryanayaki Ambal and Ashtabhuja Durga Parameshwari.
- Before restoration, the temple was in poor condition. The restoration involved **repairing two prakarams**. Overgrown plants and trees were removed. The structures were reinforced and the gopurams were repainted. The last consecration ceremony occurred in September 2023, following the restoration.
- UNESCO praised the restoration for revitalising the temple, combined modern conservation techniques with traditional methods.



- **Local craftsmen, known as sthaphathis, ensured the integrity and aesthetics** were preserved and this project sets a precedent for restoring other historic temples in Tamil Nadu.
- The **Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments (HR&CE) department** announced the recognition. Minister P.K. Sekarbabu brought into light government efforts. **Chief Minister M.K. Stalin has allocated ₹100 crore annually** for temple restorations. More temples have been identified for similar renovations, ensuring their heritage is maintained.

## CONEXPO INDIA 2024

- Union Road Transport Minister Nitin Gadkari has said that the **Central government is dedicated** to building a self-reliant **India with a 5-trillion-dollar** economy, equipped with world-class highway networks that drive growth and development.



- Inaugurating the **7th Edition of bauma CONEXPO INDIA 2024** at India Expo Mart, **Greater Noida**, in Gautam Buddh Nagar, he said exports have witnessed significant growth over the last decade, and the country is steadily advancing toward realizing the vision of Viksit Bharat by 2047.
- The Union Minister said that currently, our logistics cost is 14-16 percent, and it will be reduced to **nine percent within two years**. Mr. Gadkari said this will make us more competitive in the international market. This exhibition features over **1,000 exhibitors, over 20,000 products**, and live machinery demonstrations.

## Adani Ports To Self-Fund Colombo Terminal Project

- **Adani Ports has said that** it will use its own resources to fund a Sri Lankan port project and not seek US funding. It has added the **Colombo West International Terminal project** is progressing well and is on track for commissioning by early next year.



- Last year, the **US International Development Finance Corporation** had said that it would **provide 553 million dollars in financing** for the port terminal project, in which the Indian conglomerate has a majority stake.
- The **Colombo West International Terminal** is being developed by a consortium of **Adani Ports, Sri Lankan conglomerate John Keells Holdings, and the Sri Lanka Ports Authority**.



- Last month, SLPA reaffirmed their commitment towards the port development project, maintaining that there is no immediate plan to reassess or terminate the agreement.



- The **US Department of Justice and SEC had accused officials** of the Adani Group of bribery, which has been firmly denied, deeming them baseless by the Gautam Adani-led group. The **terminal will be Sri Lanka's largest and deepest container terminal**. When complete, the terminal will be able to handle Ultra Large **Container Vessels with capacities of 24,000 TEUs** and is expected to have an annual handling capacity of over 3.2 million TEUs.

## Syrian Capital Damascus

- **Signs of normalcy are returning** as shops reopen and people resume their daily routines in the Syrian capital, Damascus. **New transitional Prime Minister Mohammed al-Bashir** has said that one of his priorities is to bring back the millions of Syrian refugees who are abroad.



- Mr. Al-Bashir emphasised the need for stability and calm and announced collaborative **efforts with officials from Bashar al-Assad's regime** to restore public services and institutions. Syrian opposition fighters said they have taken over the northeastern city of Deir Az Zor from Kurdish-led forces.
- Meanwhile, **Israel's military has launched attacks on Syrian targets over the past 48 hours**, striking naval vessels, anti-aircraft batteries, and weapons production facilities as part of its efforts to neutralise military assets in the country.
- **Meanwhile, Greece suspended all decisions on asylum applications** by Syrians after the fall of Bashar al-Assad, the migration minister announced. Greece, the entry point for many of the hundreds of thousands of Syrians in Europe, is the latest European country to take this action.

## Google Partners With NCERT

- **Google has expanded its educational initiatives** in India through a strategic partnership with the **National Council for Educational Research and Training (NCERT)**. This collaboration aims to make quality education more accessible by launching **YouTube channels in 29 Indian languages**, including **Indian Sign Language**, for students in grades 1-12.
- In addition, **Google has partnered with NPTEL** to offer credentialed courses on YouTube, providing certification opportunities for learners. This move builds on Google's long-standing commitment to promoting **accessible education through digital tools, AI**, and partnerships with Indian organizations.



- Google and NCERT's partnership focuses on delivering educational content tailored for diverse linguistic and learning needs across India.
- The initiative will make educational resources available in a variety of formats and **languages, ensuring that students**, teachers, and parents can access engaging content in their preferred language.
- The content will cater to a broad range of subjects, supporting India's education system by **bridging language barriers and making learning inclusive** for all. **Google's use of AI further enhances** the educational experience. By analyzing video content, AI identifies key concepts and provides relevant definitions and images sourced from **Google's Knowledge Graph**.



- This feature will **support learners across multiple subjects** like biology, physics, and chemistry, offering instant explanations and enriching the video content with relevant resources. In addition to NCERT, Google's collaboration with the **National Programme on Technology Enhanced Learning (NPTEL)** brings credentialed courses to YouTube.
- These courses, covering topics from pure sciences to rocket propulsion, offer learners the chance to **gain certifications from prestigious IITs**. By offering a direct pathway to online certification via the **NPTEL-SWAYAM portal**, Google expands access to world-class learning opportunities beyond traditional institutions.

## India's Renewable Energy Capacity Surges to 203 GW

- The **total installed capacity in the country** in the renewable energy sector has increased to **203 gigawatts (GW)** from earlier installed capacity of **76.38 GW** in the past **10 years**.



- In a written reply to a question in Lok Sabha, Minister of State for New and Renewable Energy, Shripad Yesso Naik, said **the government has taken several steps and initiatives** to promote and accelerate renewable energy capacity in the country.
- The minister said as of 31st October this year, the non-fossil fuel-based installed capacity has a **share of about 46.5 percent in the total installed power** generation capacity of the country. He further added that India has committed to the **UNFCCC to achieve 50 percent cumulative** electric power installed capacity from non-fossil fuel-based **energy resources by 2030**.

## 2024 Champions Of The Earth

- **2024 Champions of the Earth**, the United Nations' highest environmental honor, were awarded to **six extraordinary individuals** and organizations for their outstanding leadership, courageous actions, and sustainable solutions to **combat land degradation, drought, and desertification**.
- This prestigious accolade recognizes trailblazers from various sectors who are at the forefront of efforts to protect both people and the planet. Since its inception **in 2005, the award has celebrated 122 laureates**.





- This year's focus was on champions restoring degraded land, increasing drought resilience, and preventing desertification.
- Almost 40% of the world's land is degraded.
- Desertification and devastating droughts are increasingly common.
- By 2050, more than 75% of the global population could face drought impacts.
- UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (2021-2030)
- Aims to prevent, halt, and reverse ecosystem degradation.
- Led by UNEP and FAO to revive billions of hectares of land and aquatic ecosystems.

<b>Policy Leadership: Sonia Guajajara (Brazil)</b>	Indigenous rights advocacy, recognized 10 Indigenous territories, combats deforestation.
<b>Inspiration and Action: Amy Bowers Cordalis (United States)</b>	River ecosystem restoration, sustainable fishing, Yurok tribe advocacy.
<b>Inspiration and Action: Gabriel Paun (Romania)</b>	Protecting Carpathian biodiversity, exposing illegal logging, facing threats for activism.
<b>Science and Innovation: Lu Qi (China)</b>	Reversed desertification, led afforestation projects, established research networks.
<b>Lifetime Achievement: Madhav Gadgil (India)</b>	Influenced environmental policies, engaged grassroots, Western Ghats conservation.
<b>Entrepreneurial Vision: SEKEM Initiative (Egypt)</b>	Promotes sustainable farming, afforestation, reforestation, and desert transformation.



## QS World University Rankings: Sustainability 2025

- **QS Quacquarelli Symonds**, renowned for its expertise in university rankings, has released the third edition of the 'QS World University Rankings: Sustainability 2025'.
- This prestigious **ranking evaluates universities** based on their sustainability initiatives, considering factors like environmental impact, social responsibility, and governance.



- The 2025 edition has brought notable improvements for Indian institutions, especially the **Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs)**, with **IIT Delhi securing a top spot**.
- Indian Institute of Technology Delhi (IITD) has emerged as the top Indian university in the QS Sustainability Rankings 2025, **placing at 171st globally**. This represents an impressive improvement of 255 ranks from last year's global position of 426th.
- **IIT Delhi's remarkable rise is attributed** to its continued commitment to sustainability through green campus initiatives, innovative research, and collaborative projects focused on sustainable development.
- The institution has long been a leader in environmental research, with numerous **projects dedicated to reducing carbon footprints** and promoting clean energy. IIT Delhi's improvement is a testament to its unwavering focus on integrating sustainable practices into its academic and operational frameworks.

Rank in India	2025 Ranking	2024 Ranking	Change	Institution
1	171	426	255	Indian Institute of Technology Delhi (IITD)
2	202	349	147	Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur (IIT-KGP)
3	234	303	69	Indian Institute of Technology Bombay (IITB)
4	245	522	277	Indian Institute of Technology Kanpur (IITK)
5	277	344	67	Indian Institute of Technology Madras (IITM)
6	299	220	-79	University of Delhi
7	376	505	129	Indian Institute of Science
8	396	449	53	Vellore Institute of Technology (VIT)
9	401	576	175	Manipal Academy of Higher Education – Manipal University (MAHE)
10	412	496	84	Anna University



# SSB Crack

## REVIEW QUESTIONS

**1. QS World University Rankings: Sustainability 2025 Which Institute Is At Top In India**

- A. IIT Ropar
- B. IIT Delhi
- C. IIT Mandi
- D. IIT Kanpur

**ANSWER: B**

**2. Rosh Hashanah Is Celebrated For**

- A. New Year Of Jews
- B. New Year Of Muslims
- C. Spring Season Of Jews
- D. Rice Harvest Festival Of North East

**ANSWER: A**

**3. Which Indian Temple Was Selected By UNESCO For The 2023 Award Of Distinction For Its Conservation**

- A. Abathsahayeswarar Temple
- B. Mahabodhi Temple
- C. Vrindavan Chandrodaya Temple
- D. Kamakhya Temple

**ANSWER: A**

**4. Which Organization Has Launched An AI Model For Weather Prediction Called GenCast**

- A. Microsoft
- B. World Bank
- C. Google
- D. World Meteorological Organization

**ANSWER: C**

**5. Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman (PM POSHAN) Scheme Is An Initiative Of Which Ministry**

- A. Ministry of Women and Child Development
- B. Ministry of Education
- C. Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
- D. Ministry of Agriculture

**ANSWER: B**

**6. Subaru Telescope, Is Operated By Which Country**

- A. France
- B. Japan
- C. Russia
- D. China

**ANSWER: B**

**7. Pilibhit Tiger Reserve Is Located In Which State**

- A. Uttar Pradesh
- B. Rajasthan
- C. Gujarat
- D. Madhya Pradesh

**ANSWER: A**

**8. Nazca Lines, Is Located In Which Country**

- A. Peru
- B. Chile
- C. Brazil
- D. Colombia

**ANSWER: A**

**9. Which Day Is Observed As International Day Of Persons With Disabilities Annually**

- A. 2 December
- B. 3 December
- C. 4 December
- D. 5 December

**ANSWER: B**

**10. National Pollution Control Day Is Observed On Which Day In India**

- A. December 1
- B. December 2
- C. December 3
- D. December 4

**ANSWER: B**

**11. Kalughat Intermodal Terminal, Is Located In Which State**

- A. Gujarat
- B. Uttar Pradesh
- C. Bihar
- D. West Bengal

**ANSWER: B**

**12. Which Organization Released The International Debt Report 2024**

- A. World Bank
- B. International Monetary Fund (IMF)
- C. World Trade Organization (WTO)
- D. United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

**ANSWER: A**



**13. All India Home Price Index (HPI) Is Released By Which Institution**

- A. National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD)
- B. Ministry of Finance
- C. Reserve Bank of India (RBI)
- D. State Bank of India

**ANSWER: C**

**14. Which Organization Launched The Business For Land Initiative**

- A. World Health Organization (WHO)
- B. International Labour Organization (ILO)
- C. United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)
- D. International Monetary Fund (IMF)

**ANSWER: C**

**15. John Mahama Has Been Elected As New President Of Which Country**

- A. Rwanda
- B. Ghana
- C. Kenya
- D. Nigeria

**ANSWER: B**

**16. Hindon River Is A Tributary Of Which River**

- A. Yamuna
- B. Narmada
- C. Krishna
- D. Kaveri

**ANSWER: A**

**17. Which Country Joined The US And Bahrain In The Comprehensive Security Integration And Prosperity Agreement**

- A. Canada
- B. United Kingdom
- C. Australia
- D. New Zealand

**ANSWER: B**

**18. Which Country Experienced The Fall Of The Assad Dynasty As Rebels Seized Its Capital, Damascus**

- A. Libya
- B. Syria
- C. Iraq
- D. Yemen

**ANSWER: B**

**19. Who Has Been Appointed As The 26th Governor Of The Reserve Bank Of India**

- A. Rishabh Sharma
- B. Raghuram Rajan
- C. Sanjay Malhotra
- D. Vivek Joshi

**ANSWER: C**

**20. Which Of The Following Is The Earliest Known Teacher Of Complete Materialism**

- A. Makkhali Gosala
- B. Ajita Kesakamblin
- C. Mahavira
- D. Dashratha

**ANSWER: B**